

## **Business Writing Course Training Report and Recommendations**

### **I. Assignment**

This course developed and delivered by Michelle Millard from the Chemonics' Communications Department. I was in Guyana from October 26 to November 1, 2003. Anna Johnson Slother from Chemonics' International Education Training Department assisted with delivery of the course.

### **II. Trainee Selection and Scheduling**

The Business Writing course is an 11.5-hour course, which was delivered to 25 employees of the New Guyana Marketing Cooperation (NGMC), the Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS), the Guyana Office for Investment (Go-Invest) and the USAID Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project. Participants came from different levels of management, from office managers to deputy general managers. A detailed trainee list is attached in Annex A. Because the groups were mixed over the course of the course, the list identifies attendees of each session.

Annex B contains the writing skills questionnaire administered in September 2003 to assess the skill levels of participants. The questionnaire asked participants to assess their own needs and included a test to evaluate their editing skills. Based on the similar skill levels, the course was geared toward one skill level. The courses were delivered at the CaraInn and Guyana Net facilities in Georgetown at the following dates and times:

<b>Delivery #</b>	<b>Training Group</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Basics of Grammar	Tues., Oct. 28	8:30-12:30	CaraInn
2	Basics of Grammar	Tues., Oct 28	1:30-5:30	CaraInn
3	Creating a Persuasive Argument	Wed., Oct. 29	8:30-12:30	Guyana Net
4	Creating a Persuasive Argument	Wed., Oct 29	1:30-5:30	Guyana Net
5	Creating a Persuasive Argument	Thurs., Oct 30	8:30-12:30	Guyana Net
6	Editing Your Work	Thurs., Oct. 30	1:30-5	CaraInn
7	Editing Your Work	Fri., Oct. 31	9-12:30	CaraInn

### **III. Course Participation and Rating**

At the conclusion of the course, 24 of the 25 trainees submitted course evaluations. One participant did not attend the third session because of conflicting work obligations. The table below includes the evaluation topics and acceptable rating, with the primary emphasis on content and the trainer.

Evaluation Topic	Acceptable Rating	Trainee Rating
Perceived knowledge gain	40 %	78 %
Ability of content to improve work performance	85 %	94 %
Ability of the trainers	85 %	98 %
Logistics comfortable and well-planned	75 %	93 %

#### IV. Exercises used for Trainee Evaluation

Exercises that were scored in this course included the following behavioral objectives:

1) After a group discussion of the difference between specialized readers and general readers, participants assessed in a written exercise their own communications responsibilities and chose the appropriate tool to correspond with each responsibility and particular audience.

##### *Trainer Observation:*

The participants seemed to understand easily the concepts behind gearing their writing toward a particular audience. The participants demonstrated a thorough comprehension of the need to use language appropriate to their audience.

2) After lessons outlining the steps to creating a persuasive argument and using them to write a practice letters, participants re-wrote a poorly written sample letter. Participants were evaluated on their ability to write clearly, professionally, and to organize their key points and provide supporting information. Letter basics of salutations, introductions, and conclusions were also evaluated. After evaluation, the letters were returned to participants with specific suggestions for improvement.

##### *Trainer Observation:*

Participants completed this exercise on computers, with the exception of three or four who were unfamiliar with computers and do not use them in their daily work. This lesson can be done without computers to facilitate scheduling or adapt to a group that may not be computer literate.

3) After reinforcing the steps to creating a persuasive argument, participants wrote a persuasive memo requesting a raise in salary. Participants were evaluated on the clear, concise presentation of their argument, as well as the appropriateness of the argument in a business setting. Participants were also evaluated on spelling, creating clear topic sentences, and including an effective introduction and conclusion. After evaluation, participants received their memos with comments and suggestions for improvement.

#### Trainee Scores

To achieve successful knowledge gain in the Business Writing course, trainees needed to achieve a score of 75 percent. Note that the mean scores below have been adjusted for three participants

who did not submit one of the three exercises. The mean scores are listed by each participating agency.

<b>Training Group</b>	<b>Score</b>
New Guyana Marketing Cooperation	89%
Guyana National Bureau of Standards	86%
Guyana Office for Investment	92%
USAID Guyana Economic Opportunities Project	93%

Back-up documentation for statistics in Sections III and IV are available at the GEO office.

## **V. Trainer Recommendations**

Annex C contains action items, suggestions for future training, and general observations. These include enhancements to the current courses, additional training possibilities, and potential changes to the trainee groupings.

## Annex A. Trainee List and Groupings

### Basics of Grammar-Group 1

**Date:** Tuesday, October 28

**Time:** 8:30 – 12:30 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Charmain Niles	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
2	Candelle Walcott	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
3	Shailendra Rai	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
4	Sheron Daniel	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
5	Vanessa Devonish	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
6	Micola Carew	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
7	Roxan Bourne	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
8	Chion Proffitt	Guyana Office for Investment
9	Michelle Washington	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
10	Rosaline Perkins	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
11	Celestine Butters	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
12	Alicia Rajpal	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
13	Savitrie Sarjoo	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project

### Basics of Grammar-Group 2

**Date:** Tuesday, October 28

**Time:** 1:30 – 5:30 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Jowala Somai	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
2	Tracy Ann Seaforth	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
3	Melissa Dhanraj	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
4	Shaunna Harris	Guyana Office for Investment
5	Thani Siewdyl	Guyana Office for Investment
6	Troy Pearson	Guyana Office for Investment
7	Lloyd David	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
8	Daniel Singh	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
9	Rodlyn Grant	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
10	Joycelyn Boyce	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
11	Cheryl Embrack	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
12	Colleen Levans	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation

**Creating a Persuasive Argument-Group 1****Date:** Wednesday, October 29**Time:** 8:30 – 12:30 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Melissa Dhanraj	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
2	Vanessa Devonish	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
3	Roxan Bourne	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
4	Candelle Walcott	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
5	Sheron Daniel	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
6	Tracy Ann Seaforth	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
7	Charmain Niles	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
8	Jowala Somai	Guyana National Bureau of Standards

**Creating a Persuasive Argument-Group 2****Date:** Wednesday, October 29**Time:** 12:30 – 5:30 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Celestine Butters	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
2	Michelle Washington	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
3	Cheryl Embrack	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
4	Savitrie Sarjoo	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
5	Troy Pearson	Guyana Office for Investment
6	Chion Profitt	Guyana Office for Investment
7	Rosaline Perkins	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
8	Alicia Rajpal	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation

**Creating a Persuasive Argument-Group 3****Date:** Thursday, October 30**Time:** 8:30 – 12:30 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Lloyd David	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
2	Shailendra Rai	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
3	Shaunna Harris	Guyana Office for Investment
4	Thani Siewdya	Guyana Office for Investment
5	Daniel Singh	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
6	Rodlyn Grant	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
7	Joycelyn Boyce	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
8	Colleen Levans	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
9	Micola Carew	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation

**Editing Your Work-Group 1****Date:** Thursday, October 30**Time:** 12:30 – 5 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Jowala Somai	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
2	Joycelyn Boyce	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
3	Thani Siewdyal	Guyana Office for Investment
4	Chion Profitt	Guyana Office for Investment
5	Shaunna Harris	Guyana Office for Investment
6	Michelle Washington	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
7	Rodlyn Grant	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
8	Rosaline Perkins	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
9	Savitrie Sarjoo	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
10	Cheryl Embrack	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
11	Celestine Butters	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
12	Daniel Singh	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
13	Troy Pearson	Guyana Office for Investment

**Editing Your Work-Group 2****Date:** Friday, October 31**Time:** 9 – 12:30 pm

	<b>Trainee</b>	<b>Title/Company</b>
1	Lloyd David	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
2	Shailendra Rai	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
3	Melissa Dhanraj	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
4	Vanessa Devonish	Guyana Economic Opportunities (GEO) Project
5	Colleen Levans	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
6	Micola Carew	New Guyana Marketing Cooperation
7	Roxan Bourne	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
8	Candelle Walcott	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
9	Charmain Niles	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
10	Sheron Daniel	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
11	Tracy Ann Seaforth	Guyana National Bureau of Standards

**Writing Skills Questionnaire**  
**Guyana Economic Opportunities Project**  
**Business Writing Course, October 2003**

**Title/Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What areas of writing do you believe need improvement? What are your writing strengths and weaknesses?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2. What is your agency's current practice for producing written brochures, reports, and business correspondence? (Is there a central person who reviews materials, do you have templates, etc.)

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3. What are your business writing responsibilities for your job?

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4. Below is an excerpt from a Chemonics International Corporate Capability Statement. Please proofread the statement, and make all changes on this page.

### **CAPABILITY STATMENT**

Chemonics International, created in 1975 by a divission of Chemonics Industries of Pheonix, Arizona specialises in the provision of technical assitance in fields of agriculture, democracy & governance, enviromental management, health, humanitarian response, natural resources managment, and private sector development. Today Chemonics Intl. is a leading international development firm in the United States.

In fiscal year 1976, we won our first contract with the United States Agency for Interational Development, an assessment of livestock, NRM, and meat sector in Kenya worth nearly \$140,000 thousand, with a key sustainable development component involving best pracitices in fertilizer and insecticieds methodologies. In 1977 Chemomic won the largest technical assitance contract the U.S. Agency for International development had ever awarded in Africa, a livestock managment contract in Malli worth three million. It was a long term contract, giving relatively steadily income over several years, and provided the foundation on which we we're able to grow.

In 2000 Chemonnics Intl.'s principle technical assistance services grew to include two new practice area: health and humanitarian response. That same year saw the companies' diverse and talented staff grow to 715 in the U.S. and around the globe. The company is currently leading multifaceted developing projects ing Afghanistan, the Phillipines, Kyrgystan, and Columbia.

Since its founding in 1975, Chemonics International has acheived a well earned reputation for strong project managment and high quality performances. Over the past 27 years our scope of service has expended so that Chemonics's areas of interest currently to include microfinance, IT, natural ressources, sustainable ag, N.R.M. and privatization, all of which are intimately connected.

## Annex C. Trainer Recommendations

Topic	Item/Action	Description/Comments	Responsible	Deadline
Course Enhancements	Revise Pre-course Questionnaire	In addition to asking participants to self-assess their training needs, require them to rewrite a sample letter. This would provide a more accurate and specific gauge of their skills.	Michelle	Nov 26, 2003
	Update Guides	Adjustments made during delivery of course require revising trainer and trainee guides.	Michelle	
	Revise Final Exercise 2.2 - Sample Letter	Letter seemed to be too complicated for participants. The unfamiliar topic distracted them from applying principles discussed in lesson.	Michelle	
	Bolster Resource Section	Add additional materials to resource section based on issues of grammar, punctuation, and editing raised by trainees.	Michelle	
	Eliminate Computer Use	Computers seemed to distract participants. Not all participants familiar with computers. Exercises can easily be done without computers.	Michelle	

Additional Writing Training	Basic Grammar Training	Some participants would benefit from an intensive course in basics of grammar (the fundamentals). Course could be taught by a local teacher or professor to compensate for the differences between American English and the Guyanese use of British English. Some grammar rules that are standard in the American business world are completely different for the Guyanese.	Tom/Marialyce-determine if there is a demand for this	
Miscellaneous	Trainee Groupings	<p>Although the number of participants did not warrant it, future deliveries may benefit from grouping trainees together by organization. This would facilitate discussion of how each organization creates documents and eliminate debate between organizations over issues of style and formatting.</p> <p>This course should also be delivered to managers and/or those who determine the specific formatting styles for the agencies. The course would address the need for a companywide style and how they as managers go about creating their style or rulebook.</p>	n/a	